



KANSHA

The title **WOODEN** has to do with my attraction to the sound quality of the clarinet, which I consider the “woodiest,” of the woodwind family of instruments. A second reference has to do with the art of bonsai (miniature trees grown in pots) and the dynamic between simplicity and complexity. The piece exploits the uniqueness and versatility of the clarinet through dynamics, articulations, and musical gestures in various registers. The level of interaction between the two parts is high and challenging in both transparent and rhythmically complex passages.

// NOTES BY TAKEO KUDO

ANOTHER TIME AND PLACE is commissioned and written for clarinetist Melanie Yamada. The idea came from Melanie's experience of visiting the museum display at the Japanese Chamber of Commerce in Honolulu and memories of her grandfather who was a member of the famed 442 Regimental Combat Team, the most highly decorated Army combat unit in our nation's history. The piece is meant to be (generally) reflective and meditative, and draws both technically and spiritually from my experiences with shakuhachi honkyoku (solo pieces for the Japanese bamboo flute) while incorporating gestures more appropriate to the clarinet.

// NOTES BY TAKEO KUDO

THE JOURNEY OF MOMOTARO for clarinet, cello and piano was completed in 2014 and can be performed with or without narration. Momotaro or “Peach Boy” is the name of a hero from famous Japanese folklore. This work was commissioned by and dedicated to clarinetist Melanie Yamada. The arrangement of the song “Momotaro” composed by Teiichi Okano is included in the music.

// NOTES BY YUI KITAMURA

SOUNDPRINTS is a musical representation of East and West in Theme and Variation form. After a short introduction the theme (marked “slowly”) is introduced in unison. Variation 1 (“freely”) is a four-note figure repeated six times by clarinet, accompanied by the koto. In Variation 2 (“whimsically”) the clarinet is played on the lower half of the instrument. Variation 3 (slowly) is a canon with widely-spaced melodic intervals. In Variation 4 (“vigorously”) the clarinet has a jazzy motive, the koto a rhythmic ostinato. The theme then returns in a canonic version and evolves into a Coda with extended trill by the clarinet and coloristic motives by the koto. **SOUNDPRINTS** concludes with taps on small, tuned brass bowls.

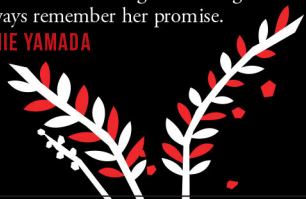
// NOTES BY NEIL MCKAY

JAPANESE FOLKSONGS scored for clarinet and piano, features four traditional Japanese folk songs arranged by Scott Richards. This fun and lighthearted arrangement showcases Flowers of Patience, Red Dragonfly, Spring Song, and Waiting in Vain.

// NOTES BY MELANIE YAMADA

SAKURA SONG is originally a compulsory piece written for the 2012 All Japan Band Competition. This simple and lovely transcription for clarinet quintet reminded me of a promise that my Grandmother made to me many years ago. She promised to take me to Japan to see the cherry blossoms, but unfortunately passed away before she could take me. This song is a nostalgic reminder that I will always remember her promise.

// NOTES BY MELANIE YAMADA





MELANIE YAMADA

currently holds the position of Second and Bass Clarinet with the Oregon Ballet Theatre Orchestra in Portland, Oregon, and also serves as acting Third and Bass Clarinet with the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra in Honolulu, Hawaii. She has also performed with the Hawaii Opera Theatre, Chamber Music Hawaii, Las Vegas Philharmonic, and Sarasota Orchestra.

In 2004, she was awarded runner up in the International

Clarinet Association's orchestral excerpt competition and in 2008 she selected to be a participant of the highly competitive Weill Institute Carnegie Hall orchestral master class program. She holds her Master's Degree in clarinet performance from Rice University and her Bachelor's Degree in clarinet performance from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

Japanese pianist **MARIKO FURUKAWA** began her studies of the piano at the age of five. She is the winner of many prestigious competitions throughout Asia, Europe and the United States.

Mariko has collaborated with such musicians as The Orion String Quartet, Charles Neidich, Jasmine Choi, Anthony McGill and Ayako Oshima.

In 2012, she was awarded a special prize in All Japan Music Competition for her outstanding performance as a collaborative pianist. She has been an official pianist to music festivals such as Aspen Music Festival, Kita- Karuizawa Music Festival, and Perlman Music Program. She obtains MM from The Juilliard School and BM from Mannes College of Music. She is currently a part-time faculty at SUNY Purchase College.

